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March 13, 2025

Mr. Andrew Kastning
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Alaska District
Submitted via email at Andrew.C.Kastning@usace.army.mil

Re: Public Notice of Application for Permit for Portage Creek Drainage POA-2025-00047

Dear Mr. Kastning:

The Alaska Miners Association (AMA) writes to express support for the application by AK Custom Mining to construct exploration road access at Portage Creek (POA-2025-00047).

AMA is a professional membership trade organization established in 1939 to represent the mining industry in Alaska. We are composed of more than 1,400 members that come from eight statewide branches: Anchorage, Denali, Fairbanks, Haines, Juneau, Kenai, Ketchikan/Prince of Wales, and Nome. Our members include individual prospectors, geologists, engineers, suction dredge miners, small family mines, junior mining companies, and major mining companies, Alaska Native Corporations, and the contracting sector that supports Alaska's mining industry.

The work proposed would involve construction of a 12.42-mile-long road between the Whiskey Bravo Airstrip and the Korbel mining exploration area at the head of the north tributary to Portage Creek in Alaska, including 2.9 miles of improvements to an existing trail and 8.5 miles of new road. This remote exploration road, which is essentially a compacted trail, would be used to advance work being done to detect critical minerals important for national defense and innovative technologies, as well as other mineral resources. Advanced exploration facilitated by this road will provide more jobs and stimulate greater economic development in Alaska.

The proposed work will have minimal impacts to wetlands and other aquatic resources. It will not impact any anadromous reaches of streams, any known threatened or endangered species, or any known cultural resources. Its footprint is small, and the proposed mitigation is sufficient to protect the surrounding environment. The area where the exploration road would be constructed is extremely remote, and this road would not likely even be seen by anyone in the area.

AMA urges you to approve this permit to the Applicant. Thank you for your consideration, and please do not hesitate to contact me with questions.

Sincerely,

Deantha Skibinski
Executive Director